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## Reminder: Learn More about the NCA Virtual Convention

The NCA 106<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention will be completely virtual and will include both asynchronous and synchronous sessions. [Learn more here.](#)

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## Communication at the Crossroads Series: Celebrating the Life and Career of James W. Chesebro

The Communication at the Crossroads Series at the NCA 106<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention provides opportunities to look toward the future and to consider our past. One such panel is entitled "[Communication at the Crossroads Series: Celebrating the Life and Career of James W. Chesebro.](#)"

National Communication Association Past President James W. Chesebro was dedicated to making the discipline of Communication more diverse and inclusive. Chesebro envisioned our discipline as one in which our dialogue encourages and respects the voices of everyone, not in spite of their cultural orientation but *because* of their cultural identities. He viewed the mix of cultures in NCA, the respect NCA members show for these diverse cultures, and the rich scholarship and research that NCA sponsors in understanding culture-based communication systems as necessary for constituting the foundation for the unity that makes NCA a community of scholars and as fundamental to the discipline. Throughout his storied career, he worked tirelessly to make his vision of the discipline a reality.

James W. Chesebro's passing earlier this year provides us with an opportunity to reflect on his tremendous influence. In this special session, we will provide an opportunity for attendees to reminisce about one of the true giants of the discipline, discuss his legacy, and explore how we might continue and expand upon his vision for the discipline moving forward. Colleagues, friends, and those influenced by his work and teaching are invited to attend and share.

Presenters include the following:

Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Indiana University  
Sheron J. Dailey, Indiana State University  
Shinsuke Eguchi, University of New Mexico  
Jimmie Manning, University of Nevada, Reno  
Judy C. Pearson, North Dakota State University

Please join us for this very important session.

--[David T. McMahan](#), NCA First Vice President, Missouri Western State University

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## NCA Opening Session: Mental Health at the Crossroads: Intersections in Health and Society

The [NCA Opening Session](#), sponsored by the [Waterhouse Family Institute for the Study of Communication and Society](#), will highlight the factors that impact mental health and mental health treatment in Indianapolis and the nation. Specifically, panelists will examine ways in which mental health intersects with race, gender, sexual orientation, educational attainment, and income.

This interdisciplinary panel will include scholars and Indianapolis community leaders whose work is dedicated to greater understandings of mental health and social justice. Shana Kopaczewski, Indiana State University, will serve as moderator and David Berman, Mental Health America of Indiana; Diane B. Francis, University of Kentucky; Emily Krebs, University of Utah; and Gary L. Kreps, George Mason University; will serve as panelists.

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## Great Ideas for Teaching Students (G.I.F.T.S)

Communication at the Crossroads, the NCA 106<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, promises to be an event unlike any other. As Americans, we are truly at a crossroads, with a global pandemic going on and national unrest bringing protests and calls for change not seen since the Sixties! As educators, we are uniquely positioned to help shape and change the current landscape in myriad ways. One positive impact we can have is to aid the next generation of leaders to use their critical thinking skills to enhance the quality of life for all of us. How do we actually accomplish such a monumental task? By providing quality education that helps students recognize and understand the challenges they will face.

Great Ideas for Teaching Students (G.I.F.T.S) are sessions at the Annual Convention that provide a rich array of tried and tested, best class activities designed to illuminate Communication course concepts in easily understood and fun exercises. These G.I.F.T.S have been thoroughly developed, implemented, and analyzed for their effectiveness by Communication scholars at all levels of instruction: K-12, Community College, Basic Course, 4 Year Colleges and Universities, and even Graduate education. These activities truly are G.I.F.T.S to all of us, as they bring course material to life and illustrate the practical implications of Communication theory.

These presentations will be available for on-demand viewing asynchronously during the convention. Some of the topics that will be addressed in the presentations include COVID-19, Ice Breakers, Pop Culture, Interpersonal Communication, Media, Communication Research, Debate, and Small Group Communication. Keep watching for convention details, but plan now to explore the best of the best in classroom instruction—view a G.I.F.T.S presentation and see pedagogy in action! For more information, visit [NCA Convention Central](#).

--[Thomas Bovino](#), *Great Ideas for Teaching Students Co-planner, South Louisiana Community College*; and [David Wendt](#), *Great Ideas for Teaching Students Co-planner, Iowa Wesleyan University*

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## Department Chairs and Doctoral Chairs/Graduate Directors Forums

Each year, NCA sponsors sessions for Department Chairs and Doctoral Chairs/Graduate Directors to discuss important topics and current issues that face college and university administrators.

The [Doctoral Chairs and Graduate Directors Forum: At the Crossroads of Doctoral Student Placement: Within and beyond the Academy](#) will discuss strategies for doctoral student placement and employment. Challenges, particularly in light of COVID-19, of the contemporary academic market will also be addressed.

The [Department Chairs Forum: Communication Administration at the Crossroads of Crises](#) will ask participants to take a big-picture view of crisis communication and consider strategies for addressing multiple intersecting concerns that exist within any single crisis. Presenters will offer strategies for communicating with stakeholders before opening the floor to discussion and brainstorming from all participants.

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## Register for a Preconference or a Short Course Today

Preconferences are half- or full-day sessions that take place Wednesday, November 18. The themes of the preconference sessions are intellectually and professionally diverse. The topics include mentoring, game studies, education, military-affiliated learning, health communication, COVID-19, organizational communication, social justice,

sustainability, and more. Preconferences are free for all registered attendees but do require a separate registration. For specific details of these programs, please visit the [Preconferences Information](#) webpage.

Short Courses are extended convention sessions that offer participants an intense, pedagogically driven experience. This year's lineup is diverse and addresses theories, concepts, research practices, methods, pedagogical techniques, and other specialized topics of interest to Communication teachers, practitioners, and scholars. These Short Courses are great for professional development and are being led by our discipline's experts in relevant areas. Short Courses are \$10 for NCA student members and \$20 for all other attendees.

Short Course and Preconference registrations can be included in your convention registration. If you have already registered for the convention, you can still register online for a Preconference or a Short Course by logging into the NCA website, clicking the "my account" link at the top of the page, clicking the "purchases" tab, selecting the "events" section, clicking the "details" button next to your convention registration, selecting the "add session" button, and then selecting the short course or preconference you wish to add to your registration.

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